



*John Coa*

# POINT THREE

The monthly magazine of Toc H

7p October 1973



# POINT THREE

October 1973

Editor: Ken Prideaux-Brune  
Associate Editor: Huw Gibbs  
Designer: Michael F Hill MSTd

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Toc H members accept a four-fold commitment:

- 1 To build friendships across the barriers that divide man from man.
- 2 To give personal service.
- 3 To find their own convictions while always being willing to listen to the views of others.
- 4 To work for the building of that better world which has been called the Kingdom of God.

This magazine, which acts as a forum for ideas about Toc H and about the world in which we live, takes its title from the third of these Four Points—to think fairly.

## On the cover:

A happy memory from West Pinchbeck's first venture in the field of projects. Eleven children, aged from 6 to 13, came from Leicester to spend a week's holiday in Lincolnshire. The children were accommodated in the West Pinchbeck branch room for what has been described as a very successful camp. Further pictures of this summer's projects appear on pages 166 and 167.

Photo: Lincolnshire Free Press

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Letters and articles are welcomed and should be addressed to the Toc H Editorial Office, 42 Crutched Friars, London EC3N 2AL (Tel: 01-709 0472). Opinions expressed are those of the individual contributors and not necessarily those of the Toc H Movement.

Advertising: Display and classified advertisements are included in this magazine. Full rates and data can be obtained from the editorial office.

# VIEWPOINT

## Nothing is static

One of the drawbacks of a full and active life is the impossibility of keeping regular dates with television series. I am especially sorry to have seen no more than three or four of Dr Bronowski's series of programmes *The Ascent of Man*, because they conveyed, to a non-scientist like myself, something of the excitement of scientific discovery and the importance of scientific understanding. They conveyed a sense of awe and wonder, as well as a conviction that in this century we must look to scientists, rather than to artists, philosophers or theologians, for new insights into the reality of the human condition.

Perhaps the fundamental fact which science teaches us about the nature of man and of the world in which he lives is that nothing is static; everything is moving and changing. The atoms which compose the table at which I type are themselves composed of electrons which are in a state of continual motion. The human brain is not a computer; it is a learning machine, designed to be continually responsive to new stimuli. Change is the central feature of the world; nothing is static.

This is a revolutionary and profoundly disturbing doctrine. It runs counter to an important element in human nature, that element in us that craves certainty, that seeks to create social systems and ethical systems that will stand for all time, impervious to criticism. This search for security has been a major feature of our intellectual history. Sometimes it has been a longing for a future perfection; sometimes it has been an attempt to return to a mythical past. But all such utopias, whether of the future or the past, are never-never lands.

The Middle Ages were, I suppose, the longest lived attempt to create an intellectually stable society; and the inevitable result was the suppression of Galileo. Inevitable, because the stability of that society depended on the refusal to admit new truths or to consider new ways of looking at the world.

For the scientist there can be no dogmas; there are only hypotheses. The quest for new truths, fresh knowledge and deeper understanding is a continuing one. Answers can only be provisional; and each answer reveals a new set of questions. What is true for the scientist, Dr Bronowski suggests, is true for the rest of us also.

Toc H tries to come to terms with this understanding of the world by its flexibility and willingness to try new methods and, more important, by its lack of dogma and its emphasis on the 'honest test'. A man is not asked to make any statement of belief when he joins Toc H. He is asked only to commit himself to test the Christian life and see if it works for him. *Strategy for the Seventies* stressed the fact that Toc H is a continuous learning process, in which the member of 20 or 40 years' standing is as likely as the person who joined yesterday to gain new insights.

There will always, however, be tension between, on the one hand, our natural desire for stability and our love of the familiar and, on the other hand, our realisation of the need to be continually open to new understanding and fresh glimpses of the truth.

K P-B

## Next month

**Photo features.** Reports in pictures of the successful 1973 Cotswold Festival and of the summer's projects.

**Etembeni.** Don McKenzie, founder of the Botha's Hill TB Settlement, reports on the latest developments.

**World Chain of Light.** A special article by Philip Liner from Wellington, New Zealand, where this year's Chain begins.

**Day Centres.** The thinking behind Help the Aged's current campaign for more Day Centres for the elderly.

### O the English language

*It is really absurd  
When a negative word  
To its positive isn't adjusted  
For, to tell you the truth,  
I am kempt and quite counth  
(And just brimful of ruth)  
And feeling both grumtled and gusted.*

Alec Cheercher

# HOMES FOR THE ELDERLY

George Liddle (Hon Treasurer)



That there is a widespread desire amongst the membership to do something about the needs of the elderly has been clearly shown in the letters written to *Point Three* during the past year.

The expression of this desire has come at the time when the housing problem which will face many members of our staff on retirement has been under the active consideration of the Personnel and Finance Committees of the Central Executive Committee. The members of staff who are most at risk are those who live in accommodation provided by Toc H, for when they retire this accommodation will be required for their successors and will have to be vacated by the present occupiers. Providing a house or flat for themselves will without doubt be a great burden for some and means to ease this burden are being sought, so far without success.

Fortunately we have close contacts with Help the Aged and its parent charity, Voluntary and Christian Service, with whom a very helpful and informative dialogue is in progress. These exploratory talks are on a purely personal basis and are free of any degree of commitment of our respective organisations. Primarily we went to these friends for advice but as our talks have progressed we have perceived the possibility of co-operation between us which could be to our mutual benefit in the fulfilment of our objectives. This possibility is perhaps the greater because Voluntary and Christian Service have set up the Voluntary Service Housing Society which it is intended should develop schemes to provide housing for retired workers, both paid and unpaid, of voluntary welfare services.

The establishment of a Housing Association to provide Sheltered Housing, the development of the Scheme and the management of the complex demand considerable expertise, which is

possessed both by Help the Aged and Voluntary and Christian Service but which, so far as I am aware, is not available within Toc H. A real affinity exists between us, Help the Aged and Voluntary and Christian Service in that we all care for people. In a very few years Help the Aged and Voluntary and Christian Service have built up highly efficient organisations for providing comfortable accommodation for the aged. At this moment they have over £26 million worth of sheltered housing built or in course of building. They are now pressing forward with plans to extend their help to the aged by financing, in addition to housing, Day Centres with many facilities, including lunch clubs, rest rooms, meeting rooms and activities. Toc H could work alongside these active on-going organisations. A major contribution we can make is in developing personal relationships with both the residents of the flats and the users of the Day Centres which are being established. The prime needs of elderly people are comfortable living accommodation, Day Centres in which they can meet and where they can find some fulfilment in their retirement and the understanding friendship of kindly people of all ages. Help the Aged and Voluntary and Christian Service are providing, in a magnificent way, the material comforts of self-contained flats and Day Centres. Toc H could, and I believe should, offer with joy the personal service and friendship.

An urgent need of the two housing bodies is urban sites suitable for their purpose. Toc H branches can perhaps help to find these. Their size should be about half an acre and they should be accessible to shops, churches, entertainments and public transport, but sites for Day Centres alone can be much smaller. Large sites when available can be developed for multiple schemes including several types of charitable developments.

The Voluntary Service Housing Society could, and I hope would, assist us by accepting from us nominations for sheltered flats for retired members of our staff and also for elderly members who have given voluntary service to others during their years of membership of Toc H. This would be a real benefit to us.

Plenty of activity in this Help the Aged day centre in London. The need for a great expansion of the provision of day centres, offering worthwhile activities and companionship to those able to remain in their own homes, is as urgent as the need for special accommodation for elderly people who are no longer able to look after themselves completely.

The 'partnership' which is suggested herein cannot be undertaken as a short-term venture; it can only be entered into by those branches which will cheerfully give the service now and have some confidence that the branch will continue to give equal service for many years to come.

Before I end I must repeat that all the talks with Help the Aged and Voluntary and Christian Service have been exploratory only and that at this stage in no sense has any commitment been made between us. It is for you the members of Toc H to decide whether we should enter into serious discussions with Help the Aged and Voluntary and Christian Service if they are willing to have them. Give thought to and discuss what has been written and tell us whether or not your branch would be prepared to commit itself to a scheme of this kind. The decision is yours.

## Obituary

We regret to announce the death of the following members:

**In April:** Jack A Barnes (Camberwell & Dulwich), Eliza James (Stourbridge).

**In May:** Margaret Barstow (Wakefield), Stephen D Brittenden (Deal & Walmer), Eslea H L Brooks (Waveney), Richard Cowling (Torquay), Thomas Emeny (Ipswich).

**In June:** The Rev J Bouverie-Brine (Ashby-de-la-Zouch), Winifred Elsworth (Southend-on-Sea), Donald Fowke (Barkingside), John Rundle (Falmouth), R R Scott (East Anglia Area), Ronald Simmons (Amesbury), Arthur Snell (West Kirby).

**In July:** Thomas A Bennett (Kirkby in Ashfield), James B Bradford (Northern Area and former member of Central Executive), Frederick A Bridger (Southern Area), Louis Dutton (Rawthorpe), Margaret Edgington (Loughborough), Alice L Evans (Central), James T Hanley (Kingsbury), Edith M Norman-Brown (Wadhurst), Eric N Raine (Whitstable), Kathleen H Thornley (Salford), Herbert G Tucker (Cirencester), Mary Wake (Darlington), Ethel Whitworth (Rochdale).

**In August:** Lillian C Dartnell (Dartford), Arthur Howard (Salford), Alice H Thornton-Kemsley (Central), Violet M Walker (Cheltenham).

We give thanks for their lives.

# The importance of play

Lesley Moreland, General Secretary of the Toy Libraries Association

*'I'll swap you a loan of our trampoline for a loan of your doll's pram'—from this remark, made over five years ago, germinated an idea which has brought enjoyment and fun into many handicapped children's lives. Jill Norris, mother of two handicapped sons, one aphasic, one a mongol, was well aware of the difficulties of obtaining suitable toys and of expensive errors in wrong choices.*

The Enfield Noah's Ark Toy Library was started in 1967 by Mrs Norris with the help of the Enfield Society for Mentally Handicapped Children. Funds were raised to provide a stock of good toys and the library was opened to children of all handicaps and their families. Toys were available for hire at very reasonable rates—5p per month being a typical amount. Some prophets of doom and disaster predicted a chain of breakages and losses but these were actually very low. Publicity in the press and on radio led to a heavy post-bag and in turn has resulted in the setting up of some 60 toy libraries in this country. In 1972 the toy library organisers felt there was a need for a central co-ordinating body and in May 1972 the Toy Libraries Association was registered as a Charity to bring to all handicapped children the therapy, education and stimulus of playing with good toys.

Medical advances have saved many more children's lives than in the past and so every year there are more children to be helped. It is also being increasingly recognised that the earlier a child, whether normal or handicapped, receives stimulus, the better chance there is of the development of their full potential.

From the start, the close one-to-one play relationship of parent and child has been regarded as more valuable even than the toys themselves. Nurseries and hospital wards may be generously equipped with toys, but it is toy libraries which can best encourage this special involvement of a child with just one adult—and for hospital based children this could mean with a nurse or voluntary worker. They are

the catalyst that turns the toys into a living play situation. But parents (and nurses) are often too tired, lacking in confidence or knowledge to do nearly enough—they may not realise their exceptionally 'good' baby is really too passive and needs more attention than a normal baby, just because he does not ask for it. Or they may be overwhelmed by an over-active child. And as the child grows older and they do begin to realise that perhaps they should be doing more, there is often no-one at hand to encourage them—for so many handicap charities do not have local branches, and special schools are often distant and difficult to visit. So toy libraries are beginning to fill a very large gap through being able to make contact with handicapped children and their parents in the community at a very early age and whatever their disability.

Toy Libraries can survive second rate premises (they mostly have to!), inadequate help and almost anything but inferior toys. Most home-made copies of bought toys, second toys and manufacturers' gifts are suspect. Toy Library organisers find that it is better to sell gifts and with the proceeds buy just one outstanding piece of equipment right outside the budget range of a single family. Not that expense is everything. Educating parents to recognise a really good, strong, rewarding plaything at whatever the price is an important function of the Toy Library. This is done largely through the 'ABC of Toys' produced by the Toy Library Association (35p) as a starting off guide to equipping a toy library. But individual preferences will always come into the selection too (for instance some organisers may have more enthusiasm for musical toys or for dolls' houses than others). Something made locally or found abroad or even bought from a street vendor, though it may not find its way into the 'ABC', can be enormously successful too. So the 'library' need not conform to a uniform pattern so long as it strives to maintain a consistently high standard and avoids cluttering up its stocks with second best toys.

The leaflet *Choosing Toys and Activities for Handicapped Children* (20p) deals with play as well as toys and in the same way there is a lot more to most individual toy libraries than just lending out toys. Some encourage excursions to adventure playgrounds and picnics to get children just moving and enjoying the simple experiences of woods, fields and water. Others organise playgroup activities such as painting, dressing up, printing and dough at their Family Meetings. At one toy library sixth formers have carpentry sessions with the children. Another

with the help of local Brownies makes up special expendable kits of collage, scrapbooks, sewing cards etc for the children to keep. The Association also has a leaflet *Do it Yourself* (15p) full of ideas for parents, volunteers and toy library organisers to make.

A local meeting place for parents of young handicapped children has become a familiar and important feature of every toy library. Most organisers were unprepared for the tremendous need for social contact which they encountered. It arises from the fact that, apart from the National Society for Mentally Handicapped Children, there are hardly any charities for handicapped children with local branches so that the toy libraries are breaking new ground in providing a local, accessible service to families with physically handicapped children. They provide a useful stepping stone too when parents are not quite ready to accept that their child is mentally handicapped, and can be particularly valuable for children who, because of multiple handicaps, cannot be precisely assessed until they are older—GPs and paediatricians are increasingly glad to refer families to toy libraries in all these cases. Brothers and sisters also get support from meeting each other and they are always allowed to borrow too. Older handicapped children attending residential schools or special schools outside the borough face loneliness in the holidays which toy libraries help to alleviate and they are concerned to raise their upper age limit generally.

An increasing interdependence of voluntary and professional people in running a toy library is a special strength in their development. A large number are community based, started or backed by voluntary organisations. Other toy libraries are being run by professional teams—the first of these was the Nottingham University Toy Library which has provided an invaluable prototype. Another group of toy libraries has become based on Assessment Units and Outpatient Clinics—Southend General Hospital was the first of these and has made a great success of it.

Toc H members come into contact with their local community and they could help handicapped children and their families by telling them about Toy Libraries and their activities.

¶ New toy libraries often have difficulty in obtaining premises and if any Toc H branch could offer storage and time for a twice monthly meeting, this would help enormously in spreading the network of Toy Libraries.

It is possible to join the Association even if you do not plan to actually open a toy library. As an individual member you can attend conferences, courses, receive the Newsletter and contribute to the general pool of ideas about how to meet the play needs of handicapped children.

Organisers are urgently needed to start more toy libraries all over the country (and overseas, Australia, Canada and Norway already have toy libraries) and if any Toc H member or branch would like to start a toy library or would like to help, please do contact us and send for our leaflet *How to Start a Toy Library* (15p).

Further information, complete list of publications, lists of toy libraries and application form for membership all available from the General Secretary, Toy Libraries Association, Toynbee Hall, 28 Commercial Street, London E1 6LS.

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## THE NEW FILM DOCUMENTARY

### from The British Diabetic Association

**An Interesting Film** – There are 500,000 diabetics in this country and over 4 million in the Western World. Has man evolved too quickly for his own good?

**An Exciting Film** – Doctors Banting and Best, two great names in medical research. They isolated Insulin exactly 50 years ago. Research has served and saved millions of lives.

**An Educational Film** – How do diabetics manage? What chance have they in the professions, in business, as parents? How do children cope with a still incurable disease?

35 minutes of dramatic documentary available for showing early in 1974.

### A FILM YOU MUST SEE

Write for further details and leaflet  
To Miss Hazel Bristow,  
British Diabetic Association,  
3/6 Alfred Place, London WC1E 7EE.

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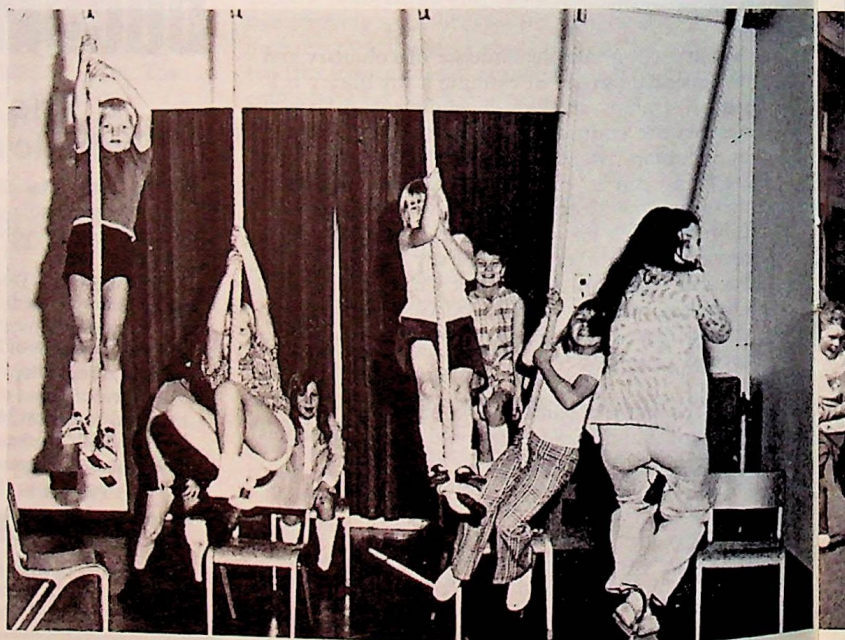
# PROJECTS 1973



Above: 'Grub up' is always a popular cry at the Surrey boys' camp. The Toc H T Shirts produced by the South East Regional Projects Support Group were worn by many of the volunteers on this summer's projects. Photo: Pat Thomas



Right: Back at school—and enjoying it. Some of the 90 children who took part in the play scheme organised by Slough, Bucks, branch. Activities were run by volunteers recruited by Toc H and by local parents. Photo: Windsor Express

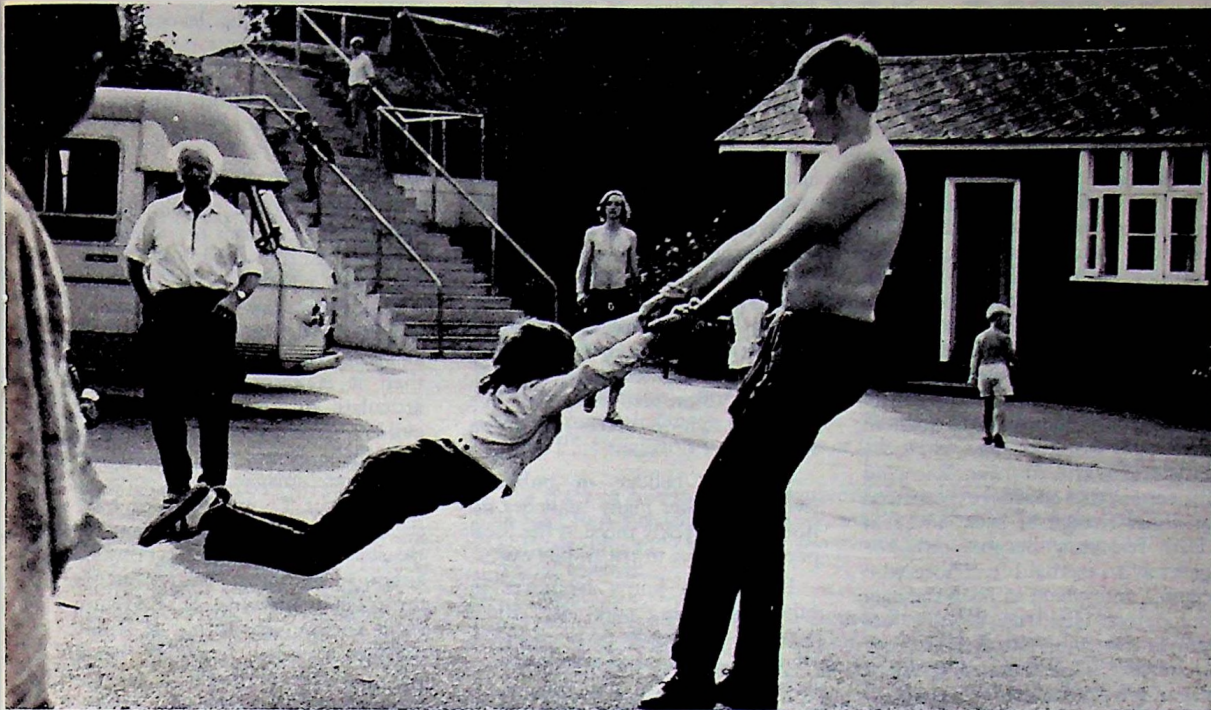


Top right: In addition to working with the residents volunteers at Hamilton Lodge were asked to do a certain amount of work in the grounds, since most of the residents who normally undertake this work had gone home for the holidays. Photo: Kenneth Mais

Far right: Children enjoy the spaciousness of Wollaton Park, Nottingham, during the two week play scheme for children from the Balloon Wood estate in the city. Photo: Nottingham Evening Post & News

**Below: The annual boys' camps have become a traditional feature of the Toc H scene in Surrey, much enjoyed by all who take part.**

**Photo: Pat Thomas**  
A further selection of photographs of this summer's projects will appear next month.



## Letters

### The Christian basis

May I, as an overseas member of long standing, refer to the problems discussed in *Vienpoint* in May. In the early years of Toc H there was little difficulty in defining what was meant by the word 'Christian', or such phrases as 'the eternal realities', 'to know his will revealed in Christ and to do it fearlessly', etc. To be a Christian, as it was understood in those days, meant having had a *Personal* experience of and encounter with Christ, as actually happened to hundreds of men in the Upper Room of the Old House in World War I. It meant knowing for certain that one had experienced an inner change of heart and that death had now become only the gateway to eternal life. Those who claim commitment to Jesus the man but reject His true divinity are simply deceiving themselves; they are no more Christian than the poor pagan who has not even heard of Jesus Christ.

The trouble is that in all the current discussions little or no reference is made to the manual of Christianity given us by God—the Bible. The essential elements of the Christian faith are all well defined there if one only takes the time to look for them. As for John Robinson and his *Honest to God*, I have only one word for the conclusions he reaches—rubbish. The old certainties remain—and if Toc H lowers its standards to admit to membership any who cannot subscribe to the Main Resolution as it now stands, it will richly deserve to pass into oblivion. I am *not* advocating that Toc H should be an evangelistic Movement in the generally accepted sense, but if it is no longer evangelistic by its own unique methods of service in the name of Christ, both as Son of God and Son of man, it is no longer truly Christian.

John Hoare, Victoria, Australia

### 'Practically a branch'

Although agreeing with George Lee (June issue) on some points I have to disagree on others. I do agree that many branches live in a little world of their own—my many visits as Central Councillor and speaker confirm this. However my own branch has liaison with many organisations in the town, with whom we exchange speakers. Our relations with nearby branches are also very friendly, we recently had a barbecue with two of them. We have good relationships with many Councillors and with the churches. Our padre is a Methodist minister and the branch room is in Church House, owned by the parish church. The WRVS are also there, and Age Concern, whose office I man on Mondays.

We also believe in publicity (which I gather many branches do not) and a weekly piece in the local paper keeps us in the public eye.

Do get to know members in other branches, and visit them when on holiday. It takes effort for all these things, but it is so very worthwhile.

Freda Hurt, Mansfield

### Finance

May I, as a member of over 40 years' standing, support Jack Harrison's idea (August issue). My own branch, Enfield, has a long history and was once strong and flourishing. Today it is barely kept alive by a handful of stalwarts. I know that other branches are in similar circumstances. The key phrase in Jack Harrison's letter is '... the centre is under an obligation to think afresh how this release from financial stringency can best help growth at branch level'.

My suggestion is the formation of special teams—'Task Forces' or 'Mobile Action Teams' which could go into an area and get things going. Something similar to the lines adopted by political parties at bye-elections when supporter swarm in from all sides and spend whole days or even weeks there covering it street by street. Plenty

of publicity is mandatory. This is just the bare bones of a scheme. Its implementation would require the selection of team members and their training. The leader might have to reside temporarily in the target area.

Frank C G Greening, Limsfield, Surrey

### Retirement

I do hope that the present discussion in your columns on retirement will not run into the sands. This is a subject which can quickly disappear from view, but if as a community we are to match up to the challenge of a growing social evil, then it is essential that we are articulate on the matter. Social evil? Conventional treatment of retirement cannot be presented in the simple imagery of a starving child of the Third World or have the emotive impact of someone clearly visually depicted as crippled either in mind or body; but in terms of isolation, a separation from society amounting in many cases to rejection, I suspect that if the cosy surface layers at present enveloping retirement were stripped off and the whole business plainly exposed to our unblinkered eyes, we would be horrified almost equally at what we saw.

This is a prelude to saying that Mr Morris's suggestion for a *Retirement Study Centre*, as an experiment, warms my heart. The Pre-Retirement Association has had in mind for some time the need for establishing a walk-in office on a local basis where people with retirement problems could be helped. We have temporarily had to abandon a pilot try-out because our funds are too heavily stretched elsewhere and, of course, we did not dare to envisage anything beyond the elementary provision of a practical service of aid and advice simply because of the cost of attempting anything more elaborate. Mr Morris's ideas are much more ambitious, but how wonderful it would be if some of your members could help to make his words come true.

Interestingly enough, in the June issue in which Mr Morris outlined his scheme, was your editorial which expressed concern over the approach to leisure, as apparently demonstrated by the Peterborough Development Corporation—the 'battery hen' technique. May I leave you with the thought that if we come sensibly and humanely to terms with the present day problems of retirement we should have gone a long way in providing guide lines to the real fulfilment of leisure by younger age groups.

W Loving, Editor—*Retirement Choice*

## The Four Points

Once again I have experienced a feeling of extreme frustration when talking to a prospective member. At the mention of the four points of the compass I find the first reaction is north, south, east and west. Surely it is time we changed our headings to correspond. Suggestions: 1 neighbourliness; 2 service (as before); 3 equality, evenmindedness or example; 4 witness, worthiness or wisdom.

It would be simpler and easier for them and us to remember. I wonder if others agree?

Mrs N M Clarke,  
Mansfield Woodhouse, Notts.

## Thank You

This letter comes with the thanks from the parents of the 24 boys who spent a week's camp at Dibgate, Kent.

In this letter the Committee of the Toc H Hackney Youth Development Support Group would like to thank John Burgess, the Warden of Prideaux House, for being a great sport in having the House turned upside down for the past six weeks.

There is a lot more than could be said but it would fill the magazine, so one big thanks to all concerned with the Toc H Hackney Summer Play Project 1973.

# The Wipers Times

A reproduction in book form of the newspaper published in World War I by the Forces for the Forces.

(Edited by Patrick Beaver. Published by Peter Davies at £3.75)

After more than half a century I enjoyed reading the *Wipers Times* immensely. It kept sending me back to my own war diaries to find out where I was and what I was doing on the various days of publication, and often I was very close to the editorial offices.

But will the present generation find it amusing? That I wonder. Humour changes, and much of this is dated and different from the humour of today. There is nothing bawdy in the *Wipers Times* and that is food for thought in this permissive age. I cannot even find in its pages that gem of war time humour (a classic because of its brevity and truth), the Tommy's letter home from the trenches 'Dear mum, this war's a b . . . . . Please tell auntie. Love from Jim. PS I enclose a pound but not this week.'

The place of humour in great adversity is an interesting study. It has often a redemptive quality, making bearable the unbearable, as those who survived the prison camps and the blitz in London would confirm.

We owe much to Charlie Chaplin and Bruce Bairnsfather who helped us to laugh through the first war as did Tommy Handley in the second. I have always felt that the Almighty himself must have the highest sense of humour, otherwise he could hardly have survived the foolishness of mankind down the ages.

'Old Sweats' will certainly laugh again over the *Wipers Times* and wish to pay tribute to Capt F J Roberts, its founder and editor. Henry Williamson's foreword is a stark but true description of life on what Tubby called 'that grim semi-circle of hell known as the Ypres Salient', though I am not convinced that the trees lining the straight *pave* roads of Flanders and of northern France (p.viii) were elms and not poplars.

I would hope that the younger generation will welcome this book as they so unexpectedly welcomed *Oh, What a Lovely War* as a satire of war itself. But to appreciate the satire in the *Wipers Times*, of which the target was mainly 'brass hats' and politicians, they will need to refer frequently to Patrick Beaver's excellent notes and glossary at the end, which I found nostalgic reading. How well I remember Vaseline and Glycerine in The Fancies (p 333). But Skindles (p 371) in war time was a restaurant in Poperinge, not hotel, where the chemist's now is on the opposite side of the street to the present hotel. It was called Skindles at the suggestion of one of the Grenfell brothers who lived at Taplow, and neither of whom survived the war.

Our thanks are due to Peter Davies for publishing this amusing reminder of the brighter side of war. It is good value even at £3.75.

Brian Dickson

# Red Plastic Plates and Cold s

Mind Week, the annual mental health campaign, begins on October 28.

We are grateful for the privilege of printing this remarkable diary of a mental patient which conveys the feel and the smell of a mental hospital.

The author is a member of Toc H.

A voice said 'She's only a kid' and then the doors slammed. The ambulance left the modern hospital and headed in another direction.

The road bends and the first thing you see is the tall chimney and then the grey roof tiles. I did not see anything the first time. Voices and movement and echoing corridors. I must have had heavy sedation to sleep so long. My eyes focused on the arched doorway and the plain washed walls. I was in a small room and it was quiet and empty. Perhaps I was dead and this was a mortuary.

Bed patients should be kept quiet and there are no radio head sets over the beds. You get called early and then the washroom. Curtains round the basins afford privacy but the toilet cubicles are like stable doors. They are not very clean but better than a bed pan.

Breakfast comes round and then it's tablets. Patients allowed up help tidy the ward. A noisy restless period until they go off for occupational therapy. Drugs influence one to sleep and then it's weighing and bath time. Two baths separated by a curtain and a nurse to turn on the tap. They are taps that only turn with a key and nurse has that. Some nurses look at you but others laugh and chat and leave you in peace.

Treatment is twice weekly when the anaesthetist comes to the theatre. The theatre sister wears a special cap with tiny pleats but the nurses are familiar. The injection dries up saliva or is it the tablet? I never looked at the equipment but climbed quickly on the couch to get it over with. Those black nurses are beautiful and remind me of cricket and Jamaica sinshine. They hold your hand and you keep talking. If you don't the anaesthetic makes you spin and revolve into oblivion.

## Memory Gaps

After a cup of tea the trek back to the ward. We have starved since breakfast so now there is a meal. Silly gaps in the memory shake your

confidence. The evening will bring visitors and you need to remember their names. They come and force themselves to be casual. They are not of our world. Our excited, shambling world where waves of depression mingle with harsh, gay chatter. It's a relief afterwards to see them go. They are out there and we can't show them what is happening to us. We are treating each other. We sob in each other's arms and we shampoo our hair.

Moving to the day ward is a step forward but only a lucky few get their own room. You can't lock the door and there are no keys for the closet but it is separate from the snores and smells of the other patients. The toilets are better with normal doors. Sister trusts you to bath in private and you gleefully purchase bath cubes from the hospital shop.

The day room has a piano but no-one will touch it. The television is there but few watch it. We vacuum the carpet and we take turns on the washing up rota. If it's group therapy day the chairs have to be set in a circle. We wait and the doctors come and sit in obvious spaces and the silence is awkward. They are studying our conversation and watching for reaction. The doctors are trying to work out a programme and we are all on different drugs. A few can't take ECT but then their cure may be longer.

The chaplain has a tiny office and he asks Sister for permission for me to visit him. The room has the effect of being away from the place. A shabby leather chair and books on a shelf and a carpet. I never smoke but in the hospital we tried it. Holding a cigarette is an occupation. The chaplain is kind but of course he doesn't reach through. He arranges a film show or takes us out in his car and it's all so careful and you want to laugh in his face.

God is out in the black dark and then cleaning one's teeth He is there in this place of lonely people. Some patients are regulars, the ones with scarred wrists and the Jewess who is an alcoholic. She loves her doctor and laughs at ward security.

# Spam

They go through our things for scissors and nail files but there is a work basket full of needles in Ward 10. She showed me a book of Persian poetry but never let me hold it in my hand. Lily was a poor spinster overworked and ruled by her mother. She looked at my anemonies and said they were the lilies of the field that Christ compared with Solomon.

Occupational therapy means leaving the wards and going to a prefabricated building. At first all seems a waste of time. Canework and rug making and needlework. Once they let me go outside and tidy the garden. Billy who has lived most of his life at the hospital comes in for a cup of tea. He works about the place and he says little. In the afternoon we have card games or do some painting. On other days we attend keep fit classes. Walking in the grounds we see other patients on other wards. Sunday we gather in the chapel except Catholics who have their own service. The service keeps to the prayer book and the hymns are simple and well known.

## Slamming Doors

Getting well means I can go home for the weekend. The family try but there is a breakdown in communication. I throw things and slam doors and go back gladly. I wake up at night and devour biscuits. Night nurse tells me off because she caught me raiding the fridge for a glass of milk. Hunger and drowsiness are the side effects, largactil is reduced and I can stay awake during the day.

The other wards are crowded and the beds are close together. The old people are now on their own but when I was there we had to mix with them. It reminded me of Gran and I wanted to go home.

I knew I could walk out through the door yet I chose to climb through a window. It was high and now has a fixed latch. I wandered outside in my dressing gown and tried to get over a fence. Two men approached and I talked excitedly while they gently led me back. At the

entrance I protested but with nurses I was taken in and they put me in a bath. I was wet from the long grass and my slippers were filthy with mud.

After I was better I understood how it worked. The doctor, the nurse and the rest of them. They work on you like a potter on clay. They reassure and comfort and scold and love you and in return they see right inside the good and the bad. Some of the staff are indifferent but many coax you back to life. They call us by our first names and talk when there is time. The old patients with wet lips and lank hair are their children.

## I screamed to get in

I knew I was ill again and I had to get back to safety quickly. They said only a doctor could admit me and I screamed I would climb the gates to get in. I waited to be examined and prayed they would let me stay. I said I had a conviction and that was enough. I was put back in bed.

Out patients can have ECT just the same. They see the doctor and he records the progress and suggests new drugs. Soon it is all over and I thought that was it. I would be fine and forget the experience. Laugh over it and tell one's friends it ran in the family. The nut house was just a holiday.

I kept the tablets and never used them. I collected them into one bottle and put them away. I looked after the house and learnt how to treat a child. He tired me and I worried about his feeds. They had given me tablets to dry up the milk and now I pressed him to my breast when holding the feeding bottle. Feed and change, de-wind and put him down. Clinic and other mothers bright and full of energy. I walked the two miles pushing the pram through the puddles.

Father died and then my mother. I looked for comfort and started to slip away from the daily routine. I longed for sleep and quiet and went to bed earlier and earlier yet still awoke tired.

## Red Plastic Plates and Cold Spam (continued)

Each day to be got through. Chores and the cold. This was a symptom too, a sort of chill that even layers of clothes cannot stop.

When I took the tablets I thought how peaceful it would be. To sleep and end the struggle. I counted them as I swallowed them between sips of water. No dramatic cramming them in like a stage drama.

## How many had I taken

There was a light in my eyes and I struggled to open my heavy lids. There were bars round my cot and then someone said gently 'Hallo' and then 'Would you like a drink?' They took the tubes away next day and I could sit supported by pillows. They asked me how many I had taken and then kept injecting me. They moved me to a side ward and let me listen on the head set to Grand Hotel. Sunday they asked me if I wanted to go to the chapel. We sang the Magnificat and there were so few of us there.

I protested at moving back to the other hospital. Yet the Christmas decorations were still up and I was given the cherished corner bed. The glow of light by the night nurse's table comforted me.

When your mind is sick it is like a bad leg; it functions only with effort. Things get lost and you forget to clean your teeth or write that letter. Then they give you IQ tests. I complained of bad dreams and they said write them down. I did. I also wrote about the hospital routine. I pleaded for the nurses' comfort since I had heard one say that the nurses' home was 'A bit of a barn'. The food on the whole was fair but so often they gave us cold spam on red plastic plates for supper. Each ward has a different colour I learnt later and my little note book had given the nurses a good laugh. Doctor said he had read it. Can you read the character of a writer as they do a painter or a composer?

## The nurses were so busy

The woman with multiple sclerosis had a little boy. Her husband brought him into the ward to see her. She was in an advanced stage unable to feed herself and she had to wait for the toilet. Then if the nurse delayed she would be too late. How that woman cried. During the day she read. She had her cigarettes and said little to the rest of us. I knew that soon she would be unable to read. Her speech would slur to unintelligible sounds and then eating too would be confined to mashed pulp. Already she wore a bib at meals

and we salted her food and one patient fed her every time. The nurses were so busy there were not enough staff and the old ladies were incontinent.

I found the library but couldn't concentrate to read. I watched the gulls on the roof and thought about Cornwall. Well, the gulls spelled the sea and the coastline of Cornwall is very beautiful. The Logan rock and Porth Leven and the little hamlets away from the trippers. People told me their problems and I suppose I must have talked about mine. I remembered last time and looked at the high window. I sat with the others waiting for ECT and swallowing fear made light of it and I had to wait till last. The worse you are the earlier you go in. Then I found that each course was some six times. I counted and realised this was the last.

I stayed in the country before I went home. It was strange when I started the house keeping again. Things were kept in different places and the cooker needed cleaning. I concentrated to remember recipes and I changed the furniture round. Suddenly I had changed, the dusting could wait, I wanted to be outside in the air. Sea lavender that makes a grotto for the Christmas crib. Carols by candlelight. Warmth and kindness and our friends at the farm. Love in the home that held our child. Taking her back again and crying our thanks.

## Welcome Point

The following branches elected new members during July and August

14—Bala(w).

6—Seaford (j).

3—Dalton in Furness (w), Newport (w).

2—Bideford (m), Bristol Action joint grp, Corwen (m), East Midlands Area, Edgmond (j), Glenrothes (j), Kirkby Lonsdale (w).

1—Broadstairs & St Peters (m), Brookfield (m), Burraton (m), Dolgellau (m), Fleet (w), Glen Parva (w), Hemel Hempstead (m), Herne Bay (j), Huddersfield (w), Keighley (w), Kennington (London) (m), Launceston (j), Melton Mowbray (m), Newbury (w), Poperinge, Prestonpans (m), Sheringham (w), Skelmorlie & Wemyss Bay (j), Spalding (w), Staxton/Flixton (m), Stony Stratford & Wolverton (w), Sutton in Ashfield (w), Swannington (w), Washington (j), Wellingborough (m), West Worthing (m), Whetstone & Finchley (m).

We extend a warm welcome to the 67 new members.

# NEWSPOINT

## SUMMER SCHOOL IN NORTH WALES

Ernest Long

Accents of Cambria and Cockaigne, in harmony with those of Bristol, Blackpool and Crewe, interspersed by occasional staccato Caledonian comments, were heard at the Bangor Summer School's ninth session which commenced on Sunday, July 15.

Bill Williams opened the assembly in fine style by leading a spirited discussion on *Strategy in the Seventies*. PRO Huw Gibbs, in two lectures under the heading of Shaking the Pagoda Tree—a Korean application of the familiar 'woods and trees' saying, shook us with some hard-hitting demands to search for our foundations and then a request to convert our neighbours.

Poet and novelist, Emyr Humphreys, crossed the Straits of Menai on four occasions to enthral us with a series of testaments on 'Truth and Imagination' and on another occasion, Hugh ap John Jones gave us some frightening facts on the subject of 'Education in the Future'.

A Noson Lawen on the final evening produced some excellent entertainment from the strangest of sources. Padre John Jones heard one new story during the week and Padre Basil Jones was seen to make a note of another in his diary.

Each day was ushered in with a short but delightful sermon from Basil and he also acted as guide on the several excursions into the rugged North Wales countryside. The morning of departure commenced with Holy Communion celebrated by the Rev Gilbert Hoppley, our Warden-Host at the Church Hostel and later a small token of appreciation was handed to the staff who had served us so well

throughout the week.

Organiser Cyril Carrier is to be complimented on the excellent programme he set for us and we look forward with joyful anticipation to the tenth School in 1974.

## School raises funds for emergency lights

Loughton High School in Essex selected the Loughton branch flashing light emergency call system as

the beneficiary of its fund raising activities in 1973. As a result of their efforts a cheque for £100 has been handed to the branch.

Norman Chidley also tells us that the 8mm film on the scheme made by the branch has been very heavily booked in recent months. 'Perhaps the most useful booking,' he says, 'was a showing at the Royal Overseas Club, Piccadilly, where business chiefs including many from overseas watched the film'. It is also in considerable demand at police training colleges.

The 'bicycle made for two' belongs to Heather Hicks and Philip James, two of the earliest members of the Weybridge, Surrey, Mobile Action group, who were married in the Baptist Church, Walton, on July 21. They will be living in Southampton. Although they have travelled many miles together on this bicycle they in fact left the church in a Mercedes, driven by Weybridge branch member Harold Collins, who is a professional chauffeur.

Photo: Harold Collins



Members in New Addington, Surrey, arranged the pantomime horses in honour of the wedding of branch chairman Dennis Prescott's daughter Janet to Graham Barton. Six members pulled the sleigh from the church to the community centre where the reception was held. The couple met when Janet took part in a Toc H show and Graham helped behind the scenes.

Photo: Craydon Advertiser



## All Systems go for Spinal Lounge

Desmond Bonner of Buckingham branch tells us that by mid-August over a third of the £7,000 required to establish the Toc H/ Jimmy Savile Lounge for spinal patients at Stoke Mandeville Hospital had already been received.

The West Herts District held a Sponsored Walk along the banks of the Grand Union Canal on September 30, reports Sue Sutton. The District invited all schools and youth organisations together with colleges and various other groups in the Watford and Hemel area to take part.

Much outside help was forthcoming in assisting with the organisation of the walk which is

part of the District's fund raising events in aid of the building of the Spinal Lounge at Stoke Mandeville Hospital. Other events included a dog show held in Hemel Hempstead on September 15, run by the ladies branch there.

The tremendous interest and sympathy for the appeal have been very encouraging.

## 'HARD NUTS'

David Pope

The Purton Branch Coconut Shie has made more money for other organisations this year than at any other time in the four years since it was built for use at Burton Hill Disabled Children's Home.

At Burton Hill this year it made £16.10 and at Purton Fete, £15 for the Care of the Elderly, £31.10 for an outlay of £11.25 for 150 coconuts. The branch is convinced that the secret of their success lies in the fact that the coconuts are not too difficult to knock off. This makes everyone want to 'have a go' and the coconuts that are carried around the fete act as silent salesmen for the shie.

The shie equipment has also been used by other branches in the District and by the Council of Social Services and a Parent Teacher Association—the latter having seen the shie at the CSS fete.

Jack Steer started the ball rolling by encouraging the branch to take part in the Burton Hill Fete. After hiring equipment for a couple of years the branch decided that it would be better off with its own equipment and Bert Walters produced an excellent set—using the

experience of his many years in Scouting to produce the parts in a portable but very robust form—poles, net, rings, guy ropes and pegs. And he threw in a mallet for good measure.

The children from Lewis in the Outer Hebrides who, as reported in our August issue, spent a

## Glorious mud

John H Smith, Greathouse Branch

*'Mud, mud, glorious mud,  
Nothing quite like it for cooling the  
blood,*

*Follow me, follow, down to the hol-  
low,*

*And there let us wallow, in glorious mud.*

This well-known Flanders and Swann ditty might well have been the theme song of an enthusiastic band of Toc H volunteers that descended on Greathouse Cheshire Home on July 21, for 10 days. Their object was to clean the pond at the bottom of the garden and clear the weeds and slime that marred its surface. Their first task, therefore, was to drain off the existing water; in itself not an easy job, but they did not reckon on the thick layer of oozy black mud which coated the bottom.

Under the leadership of Simon Large, they tackled the project with vigour, a task which would have daunted most people.

As well as working on this job of clearing and cleaning the pond, valuable work was performed in helping and getting to know the residents; friendships were formed which I am sure will have a lasting effect, and as Shakespeare put it, 'Parting is such sweet sorrow'.

holiday in Bath as guests of the Western Area.

Photo: Bath Evening Chronicle



# Country college with a difference

Harry Oliver

Lufton Manor, deep in the countryside of Somerset, is a Training Centre, where the mentally handicapped young person is helped to realise that his or her 'difference' is not as large as they might have thought. Their full potentials are trained and developed into good citizenship.

Training is given in agriculture, horticulture, and care of farm animals and poultry.

Lufton Manor, now in its sixth year as a Training Centre, is ideally situated three miles from Yeovil, and surrounded by pleasant parkland.

A two-year course for 50 students of 16 and upwards is provided, and the intake is drawn from all parts of the country, with quite a waiting list always available from which to select students. I was very glad to learn that local authorities in all parts of the country are now making grant aid available where needed, thus recognising that the mentally sub-normal person is just



as entitled to a chance in life, as his or her normal counterpart.

Mt Carter, the Principal, tells me that the Centre has only recently become a viable unit. Naturally the fees are high, as must be expected in a small establishment of such a high standard.

Much is still needed; a swimming pool costing an estimated £3,000 is a priority, especially as indoor facilities are available. £1,000 has already been raised by the Lufton Association, a body made up of parents, past students, and other friends of the Centre. Naturally the other £2,000 will be harder to raise.

**Blackmore Vale District hands over its first contribution to the swimming pool fund.**

Photo: L. Middleton

Blackmore Vale District has looked at this need, and, as a long term project, has pledged assistance with time, labour, and money.

With this in mind, a Fair was organised and as a result, at a District get-together at the Centre, the District Chairman, Fred Marsh, handed over a cheque for £100 to the Chairman of the Lufton Association.

For the third time in four seasons the Shavington, Cheshire, Toc H Boys' Club football team received the Good Conduct Cup from the Crewe and District Referees Society. The Cup is awarded to encourage sportsmanship and factors taken into consideration include the conduct of players and spectators, club administration and the general approach to the game.

Photo: Steve Morgan



## South East Hants Buys Minibus

Alan Guy

South East Hants District has acquired a 13-seater Ford Transit minibus to give assistance in local community work projects. This has been very much an act of faith by the District Team. In the belief that the shortage of voluntary transport for community work in the District requires a vehicle in immediate service, the District Team arranged a loan to supplement money already raised. Over £350 is outstanding as the minibus enters service.

Local branches of Toc H will be able to use the minibus for their projects and activities, often so short of adequate transport. It will also be used to help camps and playschemes in the Area. Other organisation with community work programmes requiring transport for children, old people, and the mentally or physically handicapped will be able to borrow the minibus.

## Belgian project group starts work

Some of the Belgians who have been on Toc H projects in Britain got together in Poperinge last Easter and agreed to form a group to launch the projects idea in Belgium. The group held its first project, at a home for the handicapped in Torhout, at the beginning of August. At the end of this month the group is assembling for a working weekend at a home for old people in Watou. In addition to cleaning walls and painting cupboards the members of the group will have a chance to get to know each other better. They will also be taking decisions about the planning of a more ambitious programme for 1974. At present the group numbers 17, of whom nine live in Poperinge.

## In brief...

Hagley branch in the West Midlands has undertaken a long term project—the replacement of worn out instruments for the band of a school for blind children. The first instrument—a brass tenor horn—has been handed over.

Budleigh Salterton, Devon, branch has presented two cassette tape recorders to the Exeter Tapes for the Handicapped Association in memory of Bill Barrett, who died last February. Bill was East Devon secretary for the Association for 12 years.

Meanwhile Tavistock branch has been instrumental in forming a local branch of the Tapes for the Handicapped Association. The branch also organised an any questions evening for Plymouth District. A panel of five speakers gave their views on the theme of 'crime and punishment'. 'The evening concluded', we are told, 'with the usual munchie'.

The Ruislip Banjo Band and a group of Scottish country dancers entertained guests at the annual party for handicapped people from Harlesden and Ruislip. Before returning home each guest received a bunch of flowers.

Residents of Cheney Court old people's home also received flowers at the end of their outing to Newbury. The outing was arranged jointly by Newbury, Berks, and North Hinksey, Oxford, branches.

The memorial garden which has, for many years, been faithfully tended by members of Porton, Wilts, branch was this year chosen by the Royal British Legion as the best kept memorial garden in the district.

The 120 members of the Ecclesfield, Yorks, Toc H Over Seventies' Club held their third annual party. The homemade cakes and sandwiches and the entertainment by a local concert party were much enjoyed.

Alice Hobson, our correspondent in South Yorkshire, also writes to tell us what a very happy week she spent at Warden Manor. 'I feel that more people should hear what chance of happiness there is there', she writes.

The Family Festival at Clacton-on-Sea, Essex, this month has been timed to coincide with a concert to be given by the Luton Girls' Choir in aid of the Toc H minibus. The Choir gives a concert for Clacton branch every other year.

# PICTUREPOINT

Below: Ted Tunnadine of Walsall branch, chairman of the Birmingham Outward Group, receives a £200 donation to the Group. Presenting the cheque on behalf of the Variety Club of Great Britain is the Rev D Collyer, watched by members of the Group and residents of Mark 6.

The Group runs adventure activities for young people, frequently using the Langdale Centre in the Lake District as a base. Photo: Simon Livingstone Studios

Below: Several branches in West Wales took part in a fete run by the Friends of Glangwili Hospital. In addition to the flower arrangement stall there was a bookstall and a garden craft stall, at which the District's patent plant tonic—better known as Epsom Salts—was sold. Photo: Carmarthen Times



Right: The Derby boys' camp might well claim to be the oldest Toc H project of them all. The boys who took part this August prepare to leave for the camp site in Osmaston Park. Photo: Derby Evening Telegraph



Below: Happy faces of some of the 200 pensioners (including two aged over 90 and eight in wheelchairs) who were treated by Harefield, Middlesex, branch to a mystery tour. The tour included Marlow and Henley and ended with a drink in a pub. Photo: Middlesex Advertiser



# Portrait of an Eviction

John Mitchell

It is one of those perfect mornings. The sun is warm on the back by eight o'clock, and there are just a few wispy clouds high in the sky. The heavy dew on the grass is drying fast.



The traffic on the main road becomes continuous as the rush hour develops, but 50 yards away 11 caravans seem fast asleep—curtains drawn, doors shut, and just the occasional child appearing to witness the first police car which arrives on the far side of the road, and waits. Then another, and then two more. Then four motor cycle patrols, ominous in their goggles and helmets. They too settle down to wait.

Soon, however, the scene crystallises as an old battered jeep arrives, supported by a gang of 20 men who stop on the grass near the first caravan while their leader talks to them. He is a large, youngish man, wearing crash helmet and heavy boots, whose fat legs indicate that he is armour clad below the belt for the occasion. The leader visits each caravan, raps on the door, and in reply to muffled shouts from inside informs them that they have half-an-hour in which to leave, or they will be pulled off.

Slowly, grudgingly, the gypsies emerge from their caravans—the men talk in huddles, watching the bailiffs—the womenfolk busy

themselves with rousing their children, and with pots and pans. It looks like activity, but it certainly isn't packing.

At the edge of the site, flanked by two senior police officers, the representative of the Corporation stands, armed with proof of ownership of the field. Small groups of residents begin to gather in knots, wagging their heads and sharing second hand stories of neighbours who have suffered at the hands of the 'tinkers'. One or two other men walk briskly on to the site, and converse with the gypsies—'Are you shifting Davy?' 'No, I'm not shifting—I'm staying' says the leader, and his two sons grin and agree 'That's right Sir, we're stopping here.' 'Where can we go to, anyway?' The man who spoke to them walks across to the Corporation official and a brief and angry argument ensues, while the police stand by, silent. 'They have to leave.' 'Where can they go to?' 'That's their business, but they can't stay here.' 'But where can they go to?'—A repeat of similar conversations on similar occasions that accomplish nothing, other than identifying the

newcomer as at least one local resident who takes the gypsies' side. Other friends of his arrive and mingle with the gypsies, waiting.

The half-hour comes and goes. The local press arrive in force, and wait. A TV crew arrive, and wait. More and more police arrive,

Photographs: *Birmingham Post & Mail*



including a minibus belonging to a Special Patrol Group, which parks unobtrusively a little way away, and waits.

Then it starts. The bailiffs suddenly walk briskly to the first caravan and make to raise the jacks. The gypsies and friends crowd round the jacks, the police hover in attendance, and the press juggle for places on the fringes. 'Are you moving?' shouts the leader of the bailiffs, and is answered briefly, but comprehensively by a gypsy mother. Pushing and shoving starts. The bailiffs get close to the jacks a few times, but are hustled away with curses and shouting. Someone gets pushed to the ground and gets up cursing. A gypsy picks up a brick and is restrained by his own folk. Gypsy children mingle in the struggle, and are then pulled away by the police, with jokes and smiles, working hard to reduce the tension. Tempers flare, words get harsher, and just before the situation explodes into real violence, the police move in, separate the groups, and tell the bailiffs to move away. The tension subsides a

bit. Suddenly, four bailiffs jump into their jeep and bounce away over the grass to the farthest caravan, and start lifting jacks, but by the time they have lifted one they are hustled away from the caravan, and someone emerges with a cut lip.

The driver of the jeep tries to reverse close to the tow-bar—someone lies on the ground in front of the vehicle, and by the time he is dragged away a gypsy car is parked neatly in front of the tow-bar. The jeep drives to the next caravan and tries to push away the group of men standing round the tow-bar. There is a crash of breaking glass as one man is pushed through a caravan window and the bailiffs retreat speedily as the owner of the caravan threatens bloody murder.

And so the day goes on. At one stage a gypsy child steals the jack-brace and hurls it into a thicket—but it is retrieved. The bailiffs approach another caravan, but are driven away by a vicious dog, chained to the tow-bar. The dog doesn't bite them, although at other times during the day it is to bite two gypsies, and two of the gypsies' supporters—badly trained beast.

All the time the old arguments go back and forth. 'These people have to live somewhere.' 'They have to go, why do they make it so bloody difficult?' 'Where can they go?' No reply to that one. 'You people and your bloody Human Rights—what about the rights of local residents?' 'You're all bloody Nazis.' 'What right have they got to mess up this land?' 'What right have you got to shift them?' And so it goes. No new arguments. They have all been heard before—they achieve nothing.

By midday it is an impasse. Apart from two broken windows, four dog bites, many bruises and a lot of anger, nothing has been accomplished. The man from the Corporation has left, and a policeman on a white horse has arrived. 'Who in the blazes asked him to come?' mutters the senior police officer, but he will look good in the press photos, so he stays. Scores of residents stand watching the siege. The bailiffs go off to lunch, and the tension subsides. Soon after lunch one gypsy has had enough.



The wheels spin in the mud as another caravan starts to move. Where will they go? Who knows? Or cares? One city has solved a problem. Another gains one.

*Photo: Birmingham Post & Mail*

'If I stay they'll smash my trailer'. His friends try and persuade him to stay, but he says, rightly, that if he stays today it will be the same tomorrow, and he will just lose another day's earnings. 'Where will you go Tom?' 'I don't f . . . know, but there's no future here with these b . . . s about.' 'We must stand together.' 'What, and have my trailer smashed—I'm shifting.' He hitches his trailer to his lorry and starts to move, but the wheels spin in the mud. The bailiffs try and tow him out with their jeep, but as they pull, Tom, conscious of the estimation of his friends, has a change of heart, and keeps the hand-brake on, and the clutch of the jeep burns out in a few seconds.

The gypsies are jubilant—the tension dissolves in laughter. But there are other vehicles, and always other bailiffs, and within an hour a new jeep appears, and the process restarts. This time, the jubilation gives way to a gradual and

insidious feeling of defeat—'What's the point?' 'These b . . . s will keep at us forever.' A few gypsies are ready to stay, but all resistance dies when one caravan is pulled off, and another gypsy goes voluntarily. Gradually, grumbling, the rest follow. A mechanical digger starts its job of trenching the site to make it proof against reoccupation. The evening rush hour gets hopelessly jammed, as the lorries and caravans pull slowly over the kerb and on to the main road. 'Wasn't that sordid', comments a local resident. The gypsy kids still ask the same questions they were asking in the morning—'Why?' The police slowly drift away—the bailiffs drive off to collect their pay—the local residents go back to their homes, the gypsy supporters go away to issue angry press statements, and the gypsies themselves are escorted over the city boundary to search for a new stopping place. A big city has solved a problem.

## Small Advertisements

Small advertisements must be received (with remittance) by the first day of the month preceding publication. The charge is 3p a word (minimum 30p). *Point Three Magazine*, Toc H Headquarters, 42 Crutched Friars, London EC3N 2AL. Telephone 01-709 0472.

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**HOLIDAYS 1974.** Anyone interested in joining a Toc H holiday party to Yugoslavia next year should write to Elsa Perrin at 39 Elmar Road, Tottenham, London N15 5DH (Tel 01 800 2605) for details. A stamp would be appreciated.

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